

Families of 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines-

Hello. My name is Lieutenant Colonel Seth MacCutcheon, and I have recently assumed command of the battalion. It is a great pleasure to meet you, and I look forward to communicating with each of you over the coming months and year. Thank you so much for your tireless dedication and sacrifice in support of your Marine or Sailor. Each of you is critical to all that we do every day, and I understand that the decisions made by myself, and the rest of the command team, directly impact your lives and that of your Marine or Sailor. As such, I want you to know that before we make any decisions, we stop and think through the positive and negative effects each of those choices will have, and after careful consideration, will make the decision that best balances the welfare of the force against the demands of our very tough mission.

An infantry battalion's job is to prepare for operations against any type of enemy, or in support of people suffering from a humanitarian crisis, and to be ready to go at a moment's notice. It is a tough and demanding job, but one that the nation requires we do well. I take this mission very seriously, and I will ensure that each of your Marines and Sailors are the most well-trained and capable person they can be, so that we accomplish all that we must, and try to get everyone home safely.

What is not lost on me, is that to be a well-trained unit takes great sacrifice from our Marines, Sailors, and more frequently our families. Marines and Sailors will be gone to the field, training in northern California, and attending courses and schools, all of which take them away for extended periods. In the fall we will deploy to the Pacific for several months. During these training events, they will not be home as often as we might want, they may not always have access to phone or email, and they will be tired many nights after long days training. Because of this it is critical to the command team, that we help you, to the best of our abilities, to understand and prepare for what lies ahead.

Below is how we hope to achieve family readiness in the areas of understanding and preparedness:

Communication. I firmly believe that if a person (or family) is well-informed they will be prepared. As such, creating multiple, easy to use, methods of communication is critical to me. Our family readiness team will communicate with you through the following means:

- eMarine/ Marine On-Line
- Social Media sites
- This monthly newsletter
- A quarterly, live video, town hall meeting, where any of you can ask questions to be answered by me and the Sergeant Major.
- Town hall/ readiness meetings at Camp Pendleton
- Pre-deployment events

Training. In addition to communication, we will host or recommend numerous training seminars, that focus on (at a minimum) the following areas:

- Marriage/relationship enrichment
- Financial planning
- Deployment preparation
- Professional development
- Preparing children for deployment

Events/ Social Gatherings. Meeting other families, who will also be experiencing the upcoming work-up and deployment is something we encourage and will hope to facilitate, as it puts faces to names, and establishes a support network between you. Some future events are the following:

- Battalion Town Hall Meetings
- Family Day at Lake O'Neil
- Volunteer meetings
- Company social events and picnics

For Parents and extended family of Marines and Sailors. As I know most of you live all over the United States, and it is not feasible to assume that you would attend our social functions. Therefore, we will work to communicate with you through the following means:

- This monthly newsletter
- As previously mentioned, a quarterly, live video, town hall.
- eMarine
- Social media sites
- By asking for your assistance in creating your own 'Parents of 3/1' support network.
- Welcoming you to attend our pre-deployment send off and post-deployment homecoming festivities.

Families, friends, thank you again for your enduring support of 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, and for your dedication, love, and concern for your Marine or Sailor. Again, I look forward to communicating with you in the future and to getting to know you over the coming year.

Sincerely,

Seth MacCutcheon

LtCol

USMC